



INDOOR AIR QUALITY TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS UPDATE

In This Issue...

- [News and Events](#)
- [Feature Article: Financing Success — Funding Your IAQ Management Program](#)
- [Insight into Excellence: Making the Jump from Leadership to Excellence – North East ISD](#)
- [Have Your Questions Answered](#)

News and Events

- The [Collaborative for High Performance Schools \(CHPS\)](#) recently released the 2009 edition of its high performance rating criteria for relocatable classrooms. The new resource provides tools and guidance for designers to build and obtain high performance portables, as well as identify new opportunities for providing healthy and high-performance classrooms for students. The criteria includes guidance on IAQ and energy efficiency, two features not normally considered when designing typical portable classrooms. Access the [full article](#) today!
- The [Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools \(IAQ TFS\) Program](#) is on the move again this fall, exhibiting at three conferences across the country! The *IAQ TFS* booth will be at the [American School Health's Association's 83rd Annual Conference](#), [The Association of School Business Officials International's 95th Annual Meeting](#), and [The Council of Educational Facility Planners International's 86th Annual World Conference](#). If you are attending any of these conferences, swing by to say hello and pick up some *IAQ TFS* materials!
- The [IAQ TFS Awards](#) deadline is fast approaching! With a new school year just around the corner, be sure to get started on your [Excellence](#), [Model of Sustained Excellence](#), or [Connector Award](#) application today! Remember, winners of these awards receive an all-expense paid trip to the [10th Annual IAQ TFS National Symposium](#) in Washington, D.C., January 14-16, 2010. [Apply today!](#) The deadline for submitting an application is Wednesday, September 30, 2009.
- Registration is open for the [10th Annual IAQ TFS National Symposium](#)! We invite you to join IAQ experts and peers from across the nation at this premiere event in Washington, D.C., on January 14-16, 2010. Visit www.iaqsymposium.com to find out why this year is *the* year to attend.

[Back to Top](#)

Financing Success — Funding Your IAQ Management Program

If money grew on trees, all schools would have the funding they need to develop the robust IAQ management programs they envision. EPA's *IAQ TFS* Program provides a practical plan for school districts to build IAQ management programs using straightforward, little- to no-cost activities and practices and in-house staff. However, EPA also recognizes that it can be a challenge to set aside the additional funding necessary for major

facilities maintenance projects and capital improvements among all of the competing interests to better your schools. All hope is not lost, however. Once your IAQ management program has been established, obtaining dedicated funding for institutionalizing your program and completing more expensive IAQ projects simply requires careful thought and planning.

EPA interviewed Bob Barton, Chief Executive Officer of Catalyst Financial Group, to gain his expert advice on how schools can obtain and sustain funding for IAQ initiatives. Bob has more than 30 years of experience in developing innovative funding strategies for clients in the energy and environmental fields, and has advised large private and public utilities, state governments and hundreds of small to medium-sized businesses, as well as federal agencies such as U.S. Department of Energy, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Bonneville Power Administration. Over the last 20 years, Catalyst has arranged, either directly or with joint venture partners, over \$1 billion in financing in the energy efficiency sector. Below, Bob shares his wisdom about how to strategize and secure funding for your IAQ management program.

The first steps seem simple, but they are the most important ones you will take. To start planting the seeds for your IAQ management money tree, use these tips:

- **Communicate with key players.** Bringing in the right people at the right time is key to financing an IAQ program. It is important to bring in the decisionmakers who are the most knowledgeable about your district's budget process and who will be in the best position to help you gain acceptance for your financing plan. *IAQ TFS* award-winning school districts always include the CFO or Director of Finance, the Facility Manager, Superintendent, and School Committee Members in their meetings. Access the [IAQ TFS Communications Guide](#) for further tips on communicating with district officials.
- **Highlight Return on Investment (ROI).** Once you have gained the attention of key players, show them the ROI of the IAQ Program. As part of the [Key Drivers](#) of the *IAQ TFS* Program, highlighting ROI helps outline the cost-effectiveness of a program and can help secure buy-in from important stakeholders. Communicating that money spent on an IAQ program translates into decreased absentee rates and better classroom performance means happier and healthier customers. [CDC's Framework to Evaluate School-Based Asthma Programs](#) offers guidance on capturing ROI that schools can adapt to their IAQ management programs.
- **Tie in with energy conservation and efficiency.** One of the best ways to finance your program is to piggyback off of existing energy conservation and efficiency programs. Talk with your district's CFO to see if your district has been the recipient of any clean [energy or energy efficiency funds from the state](#). Then, discuss with him how you can package these initiatives with IAQ upgrades into one comprehensive program.

After spending some time evaluating your program and strategizing with your financial team, you can begin to consider your financial options. Over the years, Bob has seen schools get funding from many traditional and non-traditional sources. Below is a list of his best bets.

1. **Capital budget process.** In almost all school districts, the maintenance and custodial budget is determined through this process, where the district gives voter-approved allocations to individual schools and departments. While essential custodial staffing and material needs are funded through this source, trying to incorporate an IAQ program into this process can be challenging due to competing priorities and taxpayer resistance.
2. **Tax-exempt lease.** Districts with a more immediate need for funding an IAQ initiative should consider a [tax-exempt lease](#). These leases, which do not require voter approval, are a quick and more streamlined way to acquire money for "hard assets" or tangible property that are required for proper IAQ management, such as an HVAC system. A tax-exempt lease can generally be organized and completed within a few

weeks, whereas going through the capital budget process often results in a long waiting period.

3. **Bond Issuance.** If your district is considering using a bond to fund a substantial construction and/or renovation effort, think about incorporating IAQ program components into the proposal. Instead of framing an IAQ initiative as a stand-alone project, pairing IAQ with a larger project reduces the chances of fallout from weary taxpayers.
4. **Grant writing.** There is a strong case to be made for funding an IAQ project by [applying for grants](#) from local foundations. This effort pulls at the heart-strings of foundations because of the impact poor IAQ in learning environments can have on children's overall health and scholarly performance. Districts should identify foundations in their area that have a history of giving money for environmental and public health causes.
5. **Gifts.** Lastly, a district's parents association could set up an IAQ program fund that is financed entirely through gifts. If done properly, these donations can be a freebie for districts. However, be sure to frame the effort wisely so as not to produce backlash from parents who think that an IAQ project should be paid for through taxpayer's dollars.

Consider how each of these funding options could be used to help fund the IAQ management program in your district. While not all options will be appropriate for all districts, Bob advises that districts can pair funding options to create a larger pool of money.. Using the existing guidance from the [IAQ TFS Program](#) in addition to exploring new funding options will help districts create sustainable IAQ management programs — and nurture their IAQ management money trees — for years to come.

Interested in learning more about IAQ funding? Neil Zabler, President of Catalyst Financial Group, will present on this very topic at the upcoming [10th Annual IAQ TFS National Symposium](#). Come discover further methods for financing an IAQ program, network, and share resources with peers.

You can also continue the conversation on IAQ funding by joining the Schools IAQ Connector Listerv! Subscribe today to share the challenges and successes of financing IAQ programs in schools and to share helpful hints and resources. Send an e-mail to schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov, and then check your e-mail inbox for confirmation and membership details.

[Back to Top](#)

Insight into Excellence: Making the Jump From Leadership to Excellence — North East Independent School District

Progressing from a [Leadership Award](#) to an [Excellence Award](#) is no walk in the park. Hard work, dedication, and perseverance are required to make the jump to an institutionalized IAQ management program. From October 2007 until August 2008, **North East Independent School District (NEISD)** in Texas took that jump — they **made organizational changes, forged new approaches, and formalized existing techniques** in order to gain momentum, ensure sustainability, and ultimately become a National Excellence Award-winning district.

IAQ management went from being just a “maintenance” problem to a comprehensive, district-wide effort, involving all staff in creating the Safe and Healthy Schools Department. This allowed them to work together and take ownership of their building's IAQ and other safety and health issues and tackle them collectively and comprehensively. Representatives from this department began attending Construction Management and Engineering Department meetings to craft a vision of IAQ management. One major success that came from these meetings was the development of a computerized work order (CWO) system, creating a standard process for reporting and following up with IAQ issues. NEISD also recognized the value of surveying customers to elicit feedback from school staff and stakeholders regarding their IAQ program. This two-way communication helped

Update #22, September 9, 2009

build trust from the staff, parents, and other stakeholders who finally felt as though their IAQ concerns were being addressed.

NEISD's successful institutionalization of IAQ management has helped to secure the sustainability of their program. By making IAQ a priority involving all staff and stakeholders, NEISD's IAQ program has become part of their daily routine to keep their school environments safe for children.

School districts thinking about making the jump to Excellence should consider all of the elements that NEISD used to get them to the next level. Apply today — all applications for the [Excellence, Model of Sustained Excellence](#) and the [Connector Award](#) must be postmarked by Wednesday, September 30, 2009!

[Back to Top](#)

Have Your Questions Answered

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ TFS* Update? Need more information or have a quick question? Do you have suggestions for a Webinar, an Update feature or are you simply curious about an IAQ topic and would like more information? If so, send us an e-mail at IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

Share YOUR news and events! Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Update. E-mail your news to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

If you like what you're reading, maybe a friend or colleague would too — forward this e-mail! To subscribe to the *IAQ TFS* Update, send an e-mail to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com with "subscribe" in the subject line.

The *IAQ TFS* Program is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ TFS* Program at www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.

[Back to Top](#)



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